

We claim:-

1. The use of articles formed of water-absorbent open-celled crosslinked acid-functional addition polymer foams and containing finely divided silicon dioxide and/or at least one surfactant on their surface as an acquisition and/or distribution layer, in hygiene articles.
2. A use as claimed in claim 1, wherein said surface of said formed articles has been subjected to a postcrosslinking operation by application of at least one crosslinker and heating to temperatures at which said crosslinker reacts with said polymers.
3. A use as claimed in claim 1 or 2, wherein said formed articles are sheets, webs, films, strands or granules.
4. A use as claimed in any of claims 1 to 3, wherein said finely divided silicon dioxide has an average particle size of from 5 to 50 μm and a BET surface area of at least 100 m^2/g .
5. A use as claimed in any of claims 1 to 4, wherein the amount of silicon dioxide and/or surfactant on said surface of said formed articles is in the range from 0.01 to 5% by weight, based on the weight of the hydrogel foam.
6. A use as claimed in any of claims 1 to 5, wherein said formed articles are webs or films from 0.5 to 10 mm in thickness.
7. A use as claimed in claim 6, wherein, in the hygiene article, only the bodyfacing side of said webs or films has been surface postcrosslinked and treated with silicon dioxide and/or a surfactant.
8. A use as claimed in any of claims 1 to 7, wherein the predominantly open-celled hydrogel foams comprise crosslinked polymers of acrylic acid.
9. A use as claimed in any of claims 1 to 8, wherein said hygiene articles are infant diapers, incontinence products, femcare articles, wound contact materials or secondary wound dressings.